



in books

IN BOSTON

This booklist has been prepared by Boston teenagers for teenagers everywhere.

Their choices of "in" books are as varied as books can be, ranging from established classics to recently published stories for young adults, from biographies of notable figures in history to tales of fantasy.

DANGER SONG

Bryant Rollins

Danger Song is an aggressive but sensitive tragedy based on the imaginary life of a Roxbury youth struggling to survive the trials of a violent ghetto environment and still remain an individual. To some, especially those who are not familiar with Roxbury or any similar area, the book may seem a bit obscene in its dialogue and at times uninteresting; for those who can visualize and understand this area, there is a perfect mirror reflecting a picturesque yet savage vision of the social mores, values, and events that shaped the battleground for this quiet yet determined youth. The use of real street and school names, slang and street language in contrast with English of the suburbs, and the conglomeration of tension, warmth, and beauty all make this book one of the most striking and emotional treasures to present itself.

ANTHONY CRAYTON

Jamaica Plain High School

A DEATH IN THE FAMILY

James Agee

By its nature, *A Death in the Family* is of universal appeal. At some time we must all face the death of one to whom we are close.

In a sensitive way, Agee reveals the thoughts and actions of a young boy, Rufus, when his father dies. This is no novel of plot. On the contrary, it is more on the psychological level. Instead of a great plot, the reader follows the thoughts of Rufus and his sister, Catherine, making the whole story very plausible. This book also reveals many other human traits, and directly points out that recognition is the primary goal of a child.

Because of the keen insight and deep understanding of Agee, I think this book is unique. I also feel that this book should be read by every student on the high school level; however, not before, because it would only be wasted on those who could not possibly comprehend its deep significance.

DOUGLAS SANBORN

Boston Latin School

FAHRENHEIT 451

Ray Bradbury

Guy Montag enjoyed the acrid smell of kerosene, the midnight raids, the sound of fire trucks screaming through the night. Guy Montag loved his work. He had been on the force for ten years. He knew the joy of watching the holocaust consume the books which he persecuted so fervently.

But one night he encountered an old woman who refused to leave her house when the firemen came to burn her books. He also met Clarisse, who knew something of the past — when people had been happy and when firemen put out fires and didn't start them.

That was the beginning of Montag's doubt about the world around him. He wondered about the society he struggled in. Ever pursued by the authorities, he resisted till he could fight no more.

Ray Bradbury produces a horrifying plot, very real, very possibly the world which our grandchildren will enter. Yet the final chapter gives a thread of hope for this society.

DANIEL KULESCO

William Barton Rogers Junior High School

FAIL-SAFE

Eugene Burdick and Harvey Wheeler

Fail-Safe is a book about what could possibly start World War III in the future. Buck is the main character. He is a Russian translator for the President of the United States. Before the United States goes to war the men in the war room must reach point "fail-safe." A U.F.O. must pass through conditions red, blue, green, and yellow. Most of them never pass through condition green. As the story progresses, three planes have reached their destination or fail-safe point for the day. Each day the point changes. *Fail-Safe* is the story of the cause of a war which never became a war because of the decision of the President of the United States.

EDWARD J. FORD

South Boston High School

FOUNDATION
FOUNDATION AND EMPIRE
SECOND FOUNDATION

Isaac Asimov

The Galactic Empire is slowly crumbling; the provinces of the Periphery have broken away to form four independent barbarian kingdoms. Into this picture steps Hari Seldon, master and founder of the science of psycho-history. Applying his science to the Empire, Seldon finds that within five hundred years the total disintegration of the Empire will come about, followed by one hundred centuries of barbarian rule and civil war. To aid in the preservation of the knowledge of the First Empire, Seldon establishes the Foundation, a scientific institution designed to reactivate the Empire with only one thousand years between the old and new eras. The Foundation grows gradually as the Empire crumbles, and then, outer conflict threatens.

The emperor Cleon II, last great ruler of the First Empire, has designs to reconquer the lost dominions of his realm and initiate the "Peace of Cleon." In this project he comes to blows with the Foundation, which has grown into a power so great that it absorbs the areas that break away from the Empire. The war runs its course, and the space fleets are defeated.

The stage is now set for a second conqueror who will go down in Foundation history as "the Mule." This ruler is a mutant and thus he breaks the smooth running of the Seldon Plan, for Seldon's psycho-historic predictions hold only for the galaxy under normal conditions. Under the forces of the Mule, the Foundation falls and for all practical purposes the Seldon Plan is destroyed.

The First Foundation began as a colony of physical scientists under the guidance of the Seldon Plan. What members of the First Foundation did not know until much later in their history was that they were guided by a Second Foundation, a group of scientists that had, over the years, developed a mutated power of mind control. Therefore, the Second Foundation was founded as the guardian of the Seldon Plan. The Mule had made an attempt to locate the Second Foundation before he died.

After his death, the First Foundation witnessed a resurgence of power and attempted to find the Second Foundation. Both endeavors fail and the Second Foundation re-establishes the Seldon Plan and the First Foundation continues to move forward toward the birth of the Second Empire.

Each part of the trilogy is a complete book in itself, but for total enjoyment all three should be read in succession to truly appreciate this remarkable story.

DAVID VIEIRA
Boston Technical High School

GOD BLESS YOU, MR. ROSEWATER

Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

Rumored insane and disinterested in the wealth he controls, Eliot Rosewater, president of the Rosewater Foundation, is a perfect target for the ambition and greed of Norman Mushari, a lawyer concerned with the preservation of the latter's fortune. Eliot Rosewater is a mistake. He has not, as is oft-repeated, "turned out as he should have." Instead of the dapper corporation head he is a volunteer fireman and philanthropist, concerned with the needs of the various persons of Rosewater, Indiana.

Mr. Vonnegut's book is easily read, well-written, and infected with an irreverent, often irrelevant humor. I urge you to look at the cover. If that doesn't captivate you, the first page will.

ELAINE MCGRATH
Cathedral High School

HENRY THE VIII

Francis Hackett

Henry the Eighth to six wives he was wedded,

One died, one survived, two divorced, two beheaded!

Do you know who they were? What was the Tudor Dynasty? What was the result of the Pope's refusal to give Henry a divorce from Catherine of Aragon, his first wife? If you can't answer these questions, you should read *Henry the VIII* by Francis Hackett. It's a fascinating book about the man who is known mostly for his numerous marriages and for

his amazing bulk, but who should also be remembered for the many good things he did for England. Divided into seven books, it gives such a good background into a very exciting period of English history, that I highly recommend it to everyone.

DEBRA L. HOLLAND
Girls' Latin School

THE HOBBIT

J.R.R. Tolkien

Bilbo Baggins, a hobbit, is a victim of circumstance in this unusual adventure story. He is a friendly hobbit; yet, like most, he enjoys the quiet atmosphere of his home. However, one day he is confronted by thirteen dwarfs who force him into joining their small band. This band is determined to destroy the wicked dragons who unjustly occupy the hill which rightfully belongs to the dwarfs. Bilbo at first is frightened by the whole plan which unfortunately includes himself. Nevertheless, he joins the group, anxious to conquer the enemy.

As the story continues, we find Bilbo and the dwarfs right in the heart of trouble whether it be fighting goblins and trolls or persevering through the roughest of storms. Needless to say, the hobbit is constantly dreaming of his comfortable little hobbit hole where there was plenty of food and a nice soft bed. Surprisingly, the pilgrimage is a success and Bilbo gets back to his home where, unexpectedly, new difficulties arise.

The Hobbit, often referred to as an "adult fairy tale," is uniquely written and guarantees to amuse most readers.

PATRICIA O'DONNELL
Cathedral High School

THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES

Ray Bradbury

The earthlings came to Mars . . . they came because they were afraid or unafraid, keen or disillusioned. There was an intimate reason for each one. They were coming to find something or to lose something,

to dig up something or bury something; they were coming with big dreams or small dreams or none at all. *The Martian Chronicles* are these passions and dreams set against the incredible wonders and terrors of a new, eerie world.

DANIEL KULESCO

William Barton Rogers Junior High School

THE JUNGLE

Upton Sinclair

Every time I hear the word Chicago, I think of Upton Sinclair's book, *The Jungle*. No horror movie could ever fill you with so much terror. Jurgis Rudkis, a Lithuanian, came to America with his father and the family of the girl he planned to marry. Of the twelve people who came, only half still lived after three years in Chicago. Those three years were terrifying. The families settled in Packington, Chicago, where a friend of theirs had made his fortune. No movie could capture the words of Sinclair as he describes how the people became a part of the machines they worked on. Because of their ignorance they were cheated and tricked. They learned only by hard experience. Trapped by forces they could not control, they lost all hope. Packington becomes so real, the reader feels there can be no escape. Watch strong Jurgis fall apart, a piece at a time, until he nearly loses his mind since he has lost his dignity as a man. See how his attempt to work in the dread fertilizer plant fails to help his family. As he watches the destruction of Jurgis' family and Jurgis' turn to the criminal world for survival, the reader can only ask, why could this happen? The answers are in *The Jungle*.

CATHERINE DOUGLAS

Roslindale High School

MAMA'S BANK ACCOUNT

Kathryn Forbes

This is a book about a family who, by believing that their mother has a bank account, manages to settle their bills. Katrin is the oldest and the one who helps out most. She discovers that her mother does not

have a bank account when she wants to give her a pay check she received for working at the corner drugstore. Dagmar, Katrin's little sister, always seems to get into mischief.

One day Dagmar's appendix is bothering her, and when Mama calls the doctor he says Dagmar must go to the hospital. Mama and Katrin go, too, but have to wait outside in the hall while Dagmar is being operated on, and afterwards; Mama does not approve of this, so she dresses up as a cleaning woman and goes into Dagmar's room as if she were cleaning.

These are only a few of the things that happen in this book, but there are many more humorous ones. This book is very good and also funny, so why not take it out and read it.

ELENA DEMATTIA
Mary E. Curley School

MR. & MRS. BO JO JONES

Ann Head

A teenage marriage, especially one that has to be, is often looked down upon by society. But this novel reveals both the kindness and selfishness of people in unexpected places, as it brings to light the feelings of the people involved, from Grandmother Greher to July's young brother, Gary. July's Grandmother Greher, the person everyone thought would be embarrassed and disgraced, showed beautiful kindness to July and Bo Jo. Yet both their parents were very lacking in real goodness. They based their reactions on selfish reasons and what they called "helping" hurt the young couple even more.

July and Bo Jo had a second decision to make when July lost the unborn baby. Should they return to their educations or careers and cancel their marriage? July could not return to being a carefree teenager after having been a woman. She and Bo Jo showed great strength as they faced an adult problem, and succeeded in solving it.

Read this book. It shows the true colors of life.

MARIA ABATE
Julie Billiard Central High School

MY SWEET CHARLIE

David Westheimer

Forced to leave home because her father has discovered that she is pregnant, Marlene Chambers, a confused, ignorant, Southern white girl, seeks refuge in a deserted beach cottage on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Here she finds an escape from reality until the arrival of Charlie Roverts who appears a few nights later. Charlie is a young Negro lawyer from the North who has come South to witness for himself the degradation of his race. On his trip he was forced to kill a man in self-defense during a mob fight. Out of necessity, the two fugitives, hostile and distrustful of each other, occupy the house together. In the conflicts that follow, the author skillfully demonstrates that prejudice is really a fear of the unknown. These two people, tossed together by fate, get to know each other as individuals and soon their hatred dies. Their distrust turns to understanding and affection. Their continual arguments and their experiences together delight and amuse the reader but also encourage him to think deeply about the very serious problem of race prejudice.

PATRICIA ABDOU

Roslindale High School

MY SWEET CHARLIE

David Westheimer

They are a strange pair, Marlene and Charlie. Marlene is a Southern white farm girl, a seventeen-year-old runaway. Driven away from home by pregnancy, she takes refuge in a temporarily deserted summer house on the Gulf Coast. She lives in the house for over a month, eating the food and wearing the clothes that she finds there. Then one night she is awakened by someone breaking into "her" house.

Charlie, twenty-eight years old, an educated Northern Negro, stumbles upon Marlene's hideaway. He too is running away.

They are hateful enemies from the beginning. She contemptuously calls him "nigger" and he sarcastically, bitterly refers to her as "White Lady." But neither fugitive has any choice but to remain in the house. They are forced to share first material things like food, then, inevitably, unavoidably, ideas.

My Sweet Charlie is a well-written story, sensitively told. It is the story of two persons, one colored and one white, who slowly and painfully learn the meaning of understanding and tolerance.

PATRICIA BAUER
Mount Saint Joseph Academy

NIGGER

Dick Gregory

This is a truly great autobiography describing childhood, school life, and acting and performing as a stage comedian. One thing which really fascinated me was Dick Gregory's determination to be successful, to finish school, and to be a leader among his friends. Having a no-good father who ran away and forced his family to go on welfare, Dick was looked down on by even his fellow Negroes. Yet he laughed and worked as if everything were normal.

He was very slow in school and so Dick decided to get through by being an outstanding track star and that he was. He broke all high school track records in St. Louis and even ran successfully against college athletes. The climax shows his concern for poor unfortunate Negroes after deciding not to be an unconcerned Negro once he had succeeded as an entertainer.

Interesting, filled with little jokes, and written in the language of a deprived area, this book is a must for anyone who feels he cannot make it because he is black or on welfare or whatever.

DANIEL REASON
Boston Latin School

PILGRIMAGE: THE BOOK OF THE PEOPLE

Zenna Henderson

Pilgrimage is one of Zenna Henderson's books of *The People*. The People come from a planet that has been destroyed and in their search for a new home, they have come to the Earth.

A young girl, Lea, is so disillusioned with life that she tries to commit suicide. She is stopped by Karen who takes her to the canyon where

The People live. There Lea is told stories by different People about how they ran into hardships when they were found to possess seemingly magic powers.

This book is composed of short stories concerning The People and their experiences, coming back to the present with Lea and Karen as transitions.

If you like science fiction, I'm sure you won't want to miss reading *Pilgrimage*.

ANTHONY CALLOWAY
Dorchester High School

THE ROCK AND THE WILLOW

Mildred Lee

Enie wants to leave the farm. She wants a college education. But she can't just take off as her brother has done. She has had a taste of the bitter sides of life early in her teens. Sorrow, poverty, loneliness, and heartbreaks are not new to her and now, after her mother's death, a heavy role of responsibility to the remaining ones in her family has been thrust on her shoulders. The hatred towards her father and his lady friend keeps building up inside her and she practically throws away the hopes and dreams she has cherished all her life, for her future.

I think this is a sensitive and heart-warming story that moves you deeply.

LINDA SOTER
South Boston High School

THE TALL DARK MAN

Anne Chamberlain

Sarah Lou Gross is an unhappy thirteen-year-old, given to day-dreaming and to making up false stories about people she knows. Her teachers know about this habit, and they pay no attention to her tales.

One day while she is idly looking out the school window during a study period, she sees two men quarreling on a hillside nearby. The tall dark man kills the other one and then swings his field glasses all around.

They find Sarah and focus on her, and she knows the man has seen her staring at him. She is the only witness to his crime. Sure that he will come after her Sarah is afraid to walk home alone, but no one believes her story or is willing to go home with her. In desperation she calls her mother on the office telephone, but there is no answer.

This story is very tense and exciting, and it makes you understand how it feels to be lonely. It also shows how your dreams and past experiences can affect your imagination.

LORRAINE JOHNSON
Cathedral High School

TOMORROW'S CHILDREN: 18 Tales of Fantasy and Science Fiction

Edited by Isaac Asimov

Have you the inspiration and imagination to read something different, exceptional, and most of all, paradoxical? If you do, you have passed the criterion to meet *Tomorrow's Children*:

- Morton Dee, considered to be an outcast by his family and other children just because he prefers to be an accountant instead of a sorcerer
- Eddie, who nurses an alien living in the big toe of his left foot
- Alexander, an 18-month-old baby whose descendants return in time to teach him to become a superman
- Three-year-old Star Holmes, who teaches her father telepathy and time travel
- Little Anthony whose strange alien powers control an entire community
- John, who dared to walk in the place of the Gods
- Timmie, a cave boy seeking a person to love in the 20th Century

These are only seven of the eighteen unusual children whose particular tales have made this book a must for everyone who is an avid reader of science fiction.

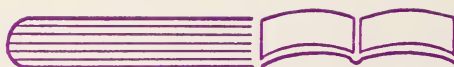
RICHARD NG
Boston Latin School

A WRINKLE IN TIME

Madeline L'Engle

Would you be brave enough to travel through space with your little brother, a boy you hardly knew, and three strange women to find your father? Well, Meg Murray is. She gets courage when she sees her mother crying over her father because nobody knows where he is. Meg and Charles Wallace go to see Mrs. Who, one of the strange ladies who lives in the woods. On their way they meet Calvin, a boy Meg knows only by sight. After all three eat dinner at the Murray house they decide they must find Mr. Murray. With the help of Mrs. Who, Mrs. Which, and Mrs. What, they travel through space. Meg, Calvin, and Charles encounter a terrible enemy and have a terrifying adventure. I won't spoil any more of the story, but I hope you'll read this spine-tingling mystery, the best book I have ever read.

MARGARET RANDO
Girls' Latin School



THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE
EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

THIS READING LIST HAS BEEN
PREPARED BY THE
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
FOR THE LIBRARIES OF THE
EASTERN REGIONAL SYSTEM.

CONSULT YOUR OWN LIBRARIAN
FOR BOOKS ON THIS LIST.